



# JOE SANFELIPPO

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 15<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0620  
FAX: (608) 282-3615  
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0015  
Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708-8953

May 17, 2015

## It's time to address the crime problem in Wisconsin

MADISON, Wis. – If you experience the unfortunate situation of a leaky roof during a torrential downpour, the most logical immediate recourse is to place a bucket on the floor as a stopgap.

Then when the rain storm subsides, you can address the root of the problem by climbing onto the roof and repairing the hole.

That's how I view my plan to bolster the state's Law Enforcement Officer Grants program.

If we can give law enforcement agencies more resources to put additional officers on the streets, that increased police presence will be a vital tool in helping curb violence and drug abuse across Wisconsin.

But I realize my proposal is only a stopgap like those buckets in a storm, and not some magic wand that will cure all problems.

If we're really going to get crime under control, it's going to take a concerted effort from district attorneys, judges and community corrections officials to make sure criminals are given suitable punishment and not just released back onto the streets.

But I still contend my legislation is essential in preparing a full frontal assault to take back our neighborhoods.

My proposed bill would help all communities in the state by increasing the overall funding for the grant program, expanding the list of eligible applicants to include county sheriff's departments and removing the minimum population requirement for eligible municipalities.

As we have seen in recent years, violence and drug use are not just limited to large urban areas. Even the smallest communities in Wisconsin, which primarily are served only by county sheriff's departments, are grappling with significant crime.



# JOE SANFELIPPO

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 15<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0620  
FAX: (608) 282-3615  
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0015  
Rep.Sanfelippo@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708-8953

Just two months ago, three people were arrested in the town of Merrill and charged with maintaining a drug trafficking place and possession of marijuana with intent to deliver. During a search of the home, police also found an AK-47 assault rifle with a fully loaded extended magazine.

My legislation would ensure that communities from Merrill – which has a population of close to 2,000 – to Milwaukee – the state’s largest city – would be given the opportunity to receive grant funding to employ more police officers or specialized crime units.

And I propose doing so without asking for additional spending.

Under my bill, the Law Enforcement Officer Grants program would be given an additional \$14 million in annual funding. The state Department of Justice, which administers the program, awarded \$1.22 million to the 10 eligible cities in the 2013-14 budget.

The proposed \$14 million increase would be realized by making cuts to other programs that are not as important as public safety. I have suggested that some of those cuts could come from the tobacco use control program, walleye breeding contracts, the Wisconsin Arts Board and tourism joint marketing.

But those cuts are not set in stone. I’m open to discussing all proposals.

By prioritizing our spending, we can succeed in making every community in Wisconsin as safe as possible. And that’s something I know we can all get behind.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Joe Sanfelippo".

Joe Sanfelippo